



Attorney General Jon Bruning

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Attorney General Bruning Announces Settlement with Directory Billing

**Note: A sound bite on this topic is available at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced a multi-state settlement with Directory Billing, LLC (doing business as USDirectory.com). The settlement stems from allegations that the company engaged in a deceptive business practice by using “live” activation checks to obligate businesses and organizations to pay for a preferred business listing on Directory Billing’s online yellow page directory.

“Businesses that use questionable methods to take advantage of Nebraskans must be stopped,” Bruning said, “These deceptive practices are a growing threat, and we must do more to prevent Nebraskans from becoming victims.”

State Sen. Kent Rogert introduced LB 781 this legislative session at the request of Bruning to explicitly prohibit this type of practice. The bill has been advanced by the Judiciary Committee and is awaiting consideration by the full Legislature.

The agreement is the result of an investigation by Nebraska and 25 other states regarding the company’s use of activation checks.

According to the settlement, Directory Billing agreed to stop using activation checks as the means of obligating businesses to purchase its products and services. The company will also pay \$400,000 restitution to the states. The money will be used to reimburse customers who didn’t understand the consequences of depositing the activation checks and the costs of the states’ investigation. Directory Billing also agreed to contact its current activation check customers to inform them of their right to cancel their agreement and of their potential eligibility for a partial refund of monies paid to Directory Billing, LLC.

Nebraska will receive \$8,064.32 as part of the settlement. There were 296 customers of Directory Billing in Nebraska.

Consumers who are affected by the settlement should be contacted by letter within the next two weeks by Directory Billing.

Consumers who believe they are victims of this or any deceptive practice should contact the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division toll-free at (800)727-6432 or file a complaint online at <http://www.ago.ne.gov>.

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